

PSY 461

PSYCHOLOGY OF WORK AND LAW

Spring 2006

Time: 12:00 – 1:15 pm Tuesdays and Thursdays

Classroom: Innovation Hall 132

Instructor: Raja Parasuraman
2056 David King Hall
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Office Hours: 11-11:50 Wednesdays or by appointment (email).

Text: *Psychology and the Legal System (5th edition)*, Wrightsman, Greene, Nietzel, & Fortune. Wadsworth.

Additional readings (journal articles and chapters) will also be distributed in a book of Readings.

Prerequisites: Introductory Psychology

Objectives:

This course will examine applications of basic psychological knowledge to the understanding and solution of problems and issues related to work, law, and their interaction. An information-processing or cognitive approach will be emphasized, although the role of biological, social, organizational, and environmental factors will also be examined. In addition to a review of psychological theories and empirical research, several real incidents, field studies, and actual legal cases will also be discussed.

The required textbook for the course is *Psychology and the Legal System, 5th edition*. In addition, a set of Readings will also be distributed. Numbers in parentheses in the Class Schedule shown below refer to the Chapters and Readings that are relevant for each class.

At the end of this course, students will have an understanding of how psychological knowledge and expertise can influence legal decisions in several different areas.

Structure of Course

Each class will consist of a mix of lectures and participatory discussion, with the mix depending on the class. Also, some classes will consist entirely of a lecture given by the instructor, while others where case studies are analyzed will be entirely devoted to discussion by students.

Attendance Policy: Attendance is expected for all classes, barring illness or other emergency

situations.

GMU Honor Code: George Mason University has a code of Honor that each of you accepts by enrolling as a student. You should read and become familiar with this code at <http://mason.gmu.edu/%7Emontecin/plagiarism.htm>. The expectation is that all of the work you do for this class will be the work of one individual. However, you are fully encouraged to discuss the readings and topics raised in this class with your fellow students.

Technology to be Used: LCD projector and DVD/VCR.

Students with Disabilities: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office

Exam Make-up Policy: You may take a test after the scheduled date only if you (a) receive my permission before the day of the test, or (b) have a valid excuse (note from a doctor, judge, sergeant, etc.). Homework assignments will not be accepted late.

Grading

One take-home and three in-class tests will be given. The take-home test will be a short essay. The in-class tests will each consist of a multiple-choice and a short-answer section. In addition, for those who request it, an extra credit assignment of 10% may be granted.

| | <u>Date</u> | <u>Chapters</u> | <u>Readings</u> | <u>% Toward Final Grade</u> |
|--|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| TAKE HOME | 2/2-2/9/04 | 1 | 1,2 | 10% |
| TEST 1 | 2/21/04 | 1,2,3,5 | 2 | 25% |
| TEST 2 | 4/18/04 | 7,8,11 | 3,4,5,6,7,8,9 | 25% |
| TEST 3 | 5/16/04 | 1,2,3,5,7,8,11,12,14 | 1 - 10 | 30% |
| CASE DISCUSSION, CLASS PARTICIPATION, ATTENDANCE | | | | 10% |
| EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENT | | | | 10% |

Total 100 points, letter grades as follows:

A: 90-100
A-: 87-89
B+: 84-86
B: 80-83
B-: 77-79
C: 70-76
F: 0-69

NOTE: IF YOU WISH YOU MAY SUBMIT THE TAKE HOME TEST BY EMAIL TO

rparasur@gmu.edu. HOWEVER, KEEP A HARD COPY AND BRING IT TO CLASS IN CASE I CANNOT OPEN YOUR ATTACHMENT.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

- January 24: Overview of Course.
- January 26: Introduction to Psychology and Law (Chapter 1, Reading 1)
- January 31: Psychological Theories (Reading 2).
- February 2: Psychology and the Legal System (Chapter 2)
TAKE-HOME TEST (Chapter 1 and Readings 1, 2).
- February 7: Legality, Morality, and Justice (Chapter 3)
- February 9: Theories of Crime I (Chapter 5)
Complete take home test on Chapter 1 and Readings 1,2.
- February 14: Theories of Crime II (Chapter 5)
- February 16: Psychology and Work I: Human Factors Psychology
Video 1: *Human Factors Success Stories*
- February 21: TEST 1
- February 23: Psychology and Work II: Vigilance and Monitoring (Reading 3)
- February 28: Psychology, the Brain, and the Law (Reading 4)
- March 2: NO CLASS
- March 7: **Case 1: Personal Injury.** (Reading 5).
- March 9: Psychology and Work. III. Accident Investigation.
Video 2: *The Blackout Effect*

March 12-19 SPRING BREAK

- March 21: Face Perception and Recognition II (Chapter 7)
- March 23: Eyewitness Testimony I. (Readings 6,7)
- March 28: Eyewitness Testimony II. (Readings 6, 7)
- March 30: Identification and Evaluation of Criminal Suspects (Chapter 8)
- April 4: **Cases 2 and 3: Psychology and Work. (Readings 8, 9)**
- April 6: Forensic Assessment I: Competence (Chapter 11)
- April 11: Forensic Assessment II: The Insanity Defense (Chapter 11)

- April 13: Forensic Assessment III: Psychopathology (Chapter 11)
Video 3: *A Case of Insanity*
- April 18: TEST 2
- April 20: Forensic Assessment IV: Psychopathology and the Insanity Defense (Chapter 11).
Video 4: *The Mind of a Murderer*
- April 25: Forensic Assessment V: Civil Cases (Chapter 12)
- April 27: **Case 4: Simultaneous Language Interpretation. (Reading 10)**
- May 2: Jury Selection (Chapter 14)
- May 4: Review of course and preparation for final exam.
- May 16: TEST 3. Final exam. NOTE: At 10:30 am

READINGS

- 1 Bringing Law and Psychology Together
- 2 Traditions within Cognitive Psychology
- 3 Awake at the Switch
- 4 Free Will in the 21st Century: Neuroscience and the Law
- 5 Personal Injury and Litigation
- 6 When a Lie Becomes Memory's Truth
- 7 Creating False Memories
- 8 Set Phasers on Stun
- 9 The Wizards of Wall Street
- 10 Simultaneous Language Interpretation

Last day to add Feb. 7th

Last day to drop Feb. 24th